

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 026288
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E:KPGARLAND:JR
APPROVED BY AF:WCHARROP
AF/E:RPOST
S/S LRFLEISCHER

-----110502 010323Z /65
O 010255Z FEB 78 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 026288

NODIS
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: X-GDS-1

TAGS: NI, ET, SO, US

SUBJECT: LETTER TO OBASANJO FROM PRESIDENT CARTER

1. PLEASE DELIVER TO GENERAL OBASANJO TEXT OF LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CARTER BELOW. SIGNED ORIGINAL BEING POUCHED.
2. IN CONVEYING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, PLEASE ALSO INFORM OBASANJO OF FOLLOWING ON SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITY IN THE RED SEA AREA: DRAWING UPON AN ENLARGED SOVIET INDIAN OCEAN SQUADRON, WHICH REACHED A LEVEL OF 25-30 VESSELS IN LATE JANUARY, THE SOVIETS HAVE CREATED A SIZABLE NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE RED SEA AREA. (BEFORE LAST DECEMBER, SOVIET SHIPS OCCASIONALLY VISITED THE RED SEA, BUT NOT IN SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS, NOR FOR LONG STAYS.) THE SOVIET CONTINGENT NOW IN THE RED SEA-ADEN-GULF OF
SECRET

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ADEN AREA CONSISTS OF ABOUT A DOZEN OR MORE VESSELS, INCLUDING LARGE TANK LANDING SHIPS, DEPOT OR REPAIR-SALVAGE SHIPS, TANKERS, AND FIVE COMBATANTS, RANGING IN SIZE FROM A DESTROYER DOWN TO SMALL FRIGATES.

THIS SOVIET NAVAL FORCE SEEMS CLEARLY DESIGNED TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO, OR TRANSPORT FOR, THE ETHIOPIAN TROOPS

FIGHTING IN THE HORN. IN PARTICULAR, THE SOVIET FORCE APPEARS TO BE INVOLVED IN SHUTTLING SUPPLIES BETWEEN

ASSAB AND THE BELEAGUERED PORT OF MASSAWA, AND IN MOVING MATERIEL FROM ADEN TO ETHIOPIAN PORTS. THE SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IS COMPLETELY OUT OF PROPORTION TO OTHER COUNTRIES' NAVAL FORCES CURRENTLY IN THE AREA.

3. BEGIN TEXT:

DEAR GENERAL OBASANJO: THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 16 ON THE DEATH OF SENATOR HUMPHREY. I HAVE CONVEYED YOUR GRACIOUS SENTIMENTS TO MRS. HUMPHREY; WE MOURN HIS LOSS, BUT WE WILL REMAIN BUOYED BY HIS SPIRIT AND HIS EXAMPLE.

WE ARE DISTURBED ABOUT THE CONTINUATION OF THE CONFLICT IN THE HORN AND PARTICULARLY ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF PRESENT SOVIET AND CUBAN ACTION IN ETHIOPIA. INFORMATION HAS REACHED US THAT HEAVY SHIPMENTS OF WEAPONS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE BEING SENT TO ETHIOPIA AND THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF ADDITIONAL CUBAN TROOPS ARE EXPECTED SOON AND MAY ENTER ACTIVE FIGHTING.

AS YOU AND I DISCUSSED IN WASHINGTON, THE UNITED STATES
SECRET

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SUPPORTS THE PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AND I HAVE SO STATED PUBLICLY. WE DO NOT QUESTION THE RIGHT OF ETHIOPIA TO CALL FOR ASSISTANCE IN SELF-DEFENSE AGAINST AN ATTACK ON ITS SOIL, BUT SOVIET AND CUBAN SUPPORT, WHICH SEEMS EXCESSIVE, IS NOT BEING PROVIDED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES SETTLEMENT OF UNDERLYING ISSUES; INSTEAD IT EXACERBATES THEM. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE IN ERITREA, WHERE THE PROSPECT OF FULL SOVIET BACKING DISCOURAGES MENGISTU FROM SEEKING A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT THAT COULD PRESERVE ETHIOPIAN SOVEREIGNTY AND BRING THIS LONG, BLOODY CONFLICT TO AN END. NOT ONLY ARE WE CONCERNED THAT SOVIET AND CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IS ENCOURAGING AFRICANS TO GO ON KILLING AFRICANS; WE FEAR THAT THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS ARE TRYING TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES PERMANENTLY IN ETHIOPIA.

THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO SUPPORT A SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL INITIATIVE TO FIND A JUST AND PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE HORN. I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU MAY SOON BE IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH ETHIOPIA CONCERNING A POSSIBLE SETTLEMENT, AND THAT YOU ALSO WILL MAKE

MORE PEACEFUL EFFORTS THROUGH THE OAU TOWARDS ESTABLISHING A BASIS FOR MEDIATION OR NEGOTIATION. YOUR EFFORTS HAVE BEEN AND WILL BE VALUABLE IN ESTABLISHING A CLIMATE FOR PEACE. I HAVE PUBLICLY URGED NEGOTIATIONS UNDER OAU AUSPICES AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.

WE CONSIDER IT HIGHLY DESIRABLE FOR THIS CONFLICT IN AFRICA TO BE RESOLVED BY AFRICAN PROCEDURES AND PRINCIPLES, AND NOT BY THE ACTIONS OF OUTSIDE GOVERNMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE SUPERPOWERS. THERE ARE PRESSURES ON US FROM MANY QUARTERS TO BE MORE ACTIVE. WE DO NOT WANT TO ACT IN ANY WAY THAT IS NOT IN HARMONY WITH BASIC AFRICAN INTERESTS AND PERCEPTIONS. WE WILL EXERT OURSELVES TO SUPPORT YOUR INITIATIVE.

SECRET

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I REGARD YOUR INITIATIVE AND LEADERSHIP AS CRUCIAL. I VERY MUCH LOOK FORWARD TO MY FORTHCOMING TRIP TO LAGOS WHEN WE CAN DISCUSS THESE MATTERS AT LENGTH. IN THE MEANTIME, PLEASE LET ME HAVE YOUR PERSONAL ADVICE AND COUNSEL. SINCERELY, JIMMY CARTER. END TEXT

VANCE

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 026288

ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

66011

DRAFTED BY S/S-O:SVALERGA

APPROVED BY S/S-O:SVALERGA

-----115620 011446Z /47

O 011345Z FEB 78 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 026288

NODIS

FOR DR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 026288 ACTION LAGOS FEB 1.

QUOTE S E C R E T STATE 026288

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UNQUOTE VANCE

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 26 sep 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS, NAVAL SHIPS, CONDOLENCE MESSAGES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 X-GDS-1
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Expiration:
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From: STATE
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Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
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Review Event:
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3474630
Secure: LOCK1
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Subject: LETTER TO OBASANJO FROM PRESIDENT CARTER
TAGS: PDEV, MOPS, NI, ET, SO, US, XW, UR, (CARTER, JIMMY), (HUMPHREY, HUBERT H), (OBASANJO, OLUSEGUN)
To: LAGOS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e599b5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
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EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
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